CONFIDENTIAL EXCISE INCOMING

Department of State TELEGRAM

PAGE 01 SAN SA 01140 121541Z 4372 SAN SA 01140 121541Z
ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-15 CIAE-00 NSCE-00 NSAE-00
SSO-00 HA-06 L-03 INRE-00 OCS-06 CA-01 FBIE-00
/058 W

B1-ED

----------140527 121631Z /43

O R 121445Z FEB 81
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2378
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 1140

DEPARTMENT PASS FBI WASHDC (ATTN: DIVISION FIVE); PANAMA
FOR LEGATT PIMENTEL

E.O. 12065: GDS 2/11/87 (HALLMAN, WILLIAM H.) OR-P
TAGS: PINS PINT SHUM ES
SUBJECT: (C) INVESTIGATIONS OF THE DEATH OF THE AMERICAN CHURCHWOMEN

REF: SAN SALVADOR 0796

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY. [redacted] AVE B7C,7D PRESENTED TESTIMONY FOR THE COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THE DEATHS OF THE FOUR AMERICAN WOMEN OUTLINING WHAT THEY BELIEVED THE TWO MARYKNOLL SISTERS RETURNING ON DECEMBER 2 FROM MANAGUA MIGHT HAVE BEEN CARRYING, AND THEY SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED US THAT SISTER ITA FORO WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN CARRYING SOME 900 U.S. DOLLARS IN CASH AT THE TIME OF HER ABDUCTION. JUNTA PRESIDENT DUARTE TOLD THE CHARGE AND DCM YESTERDAY 2/10 THAT HE CONTINUES TO FOLLOW THIS CASE AND THAT THE INVESTIGATION IS MOVING FORWARD. END SUMMARY.

3. [redacted] B7C,7D VISITED THE EMBASSY FEBRUARY 3 TO PRESENT A LETTER THEY HAD WRITTEN TO THE SALVADORAN COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THE DEATH OF THE FOUR AMERICAN CHURCHWOMEN. THE LETTER PRINCIPALLY CONCERNED WHAT SISTER MAURA CLARKE AND SISTER ITA FORO MIGHT HAVE BEEN CARRYING IN THEIR LUGGAGE AND WEARING AT THE TIME OF THEIR ARRIVAL AT SAN SALVADOR'S INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON THE EVENING OF DECEMBER 2. OF PERHAPS GREATEST INTEREST TO THE INVESTIGATION WAS THE STATEMENT THAT SISTER ITA WAS CARRYING A CHECK FOR 8,000 U.S. DOLLARS FROM THE MARYKNOLL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE IN PANAMA TO USE IN PAYING FOR A JEEP TO REPLACE ONE LOST IN A RIVER ACCIDENT LAST YEAR.

4. [redacted] TELEPHONED THE EMBASSY ON THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 7 TO SAY THAT LETTERS JUST RECEIVED FROM THE MARYKNOLL OFFICE IN PANAMA INDICATED THAT SISTER ITA HAD BEEN GIVEN 900 DOLLARS IN CASH AT THE TIME OF THE MANAGUA CONFERENCE, AND IT WAS ASSUMED THAT SHE WAS STILL CARRYING IT WHEN SHE ARRIVED HERE. THE MONEY WAS TO BE USED IN SETTLEMENT OF ANOTHER CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION IN CHALATENANGO. B7C,7D

5. EMBOFF 2/10 PASSED ON TO [redacted] LETTER ALONG WITH A TRANSLATION INTO SPANISH MADE HERE AT THE EMBASSY. [redacted] ASKED FOR DETAILS ABOUT THE CHECK SISTER ITA WAS CARRYING, AND ASKED THAT [redacted] DRAFT A SECOND LETTER TO PUT ON THE RECORD THE MATTER OF THE 900 DOLLARS. HE WAS INTERESTED IN BOTH THE CHECK AND THE CASH IN THAT ROBBERY MIGHT BECOME THE INDICATED MOTIVE FOR THE MURDERS. B1-ED B1-EB B7C

6. [redacted] CONFIRMED A NEWSPAPER REPORT WE SAW, ALSO FEBRUARY 10, TO THE EFFECT THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE HERE HAS ORDERED THE COURT AT ZACATECOLUCA TO DO ANOTHER INVESTIGATION OF THE SITE AT WHICH THE FOUR WOMEN WERE FIRST BURIED AND DISCOVERED ON DECEMBER 3.

7. ON ANOTHER FRON JUNTA PRESIDENT DUARTE ASSURED THE CHARGE AND DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION YESTERDAY 2/10 THAT HE WAS A CONTINUING PERSONAL INTEREST IN TI INVESTIGATIONS AND WILL CONTINUE TO SEE THAT THEY GO FORWARD. DUARTE HAS SEEN COPIES OF THE AUTOPSY REPORTS DONE IN CHALATENONGO UPON THE REMAINS OF SISTER ITA FORO AND SISTER MAURA CLARKE. NO BULLETS WERE FOUND IN THOSE BODIES. B1-EB, ED

CHAPIN

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY HD DATE 8 JUL 1982
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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